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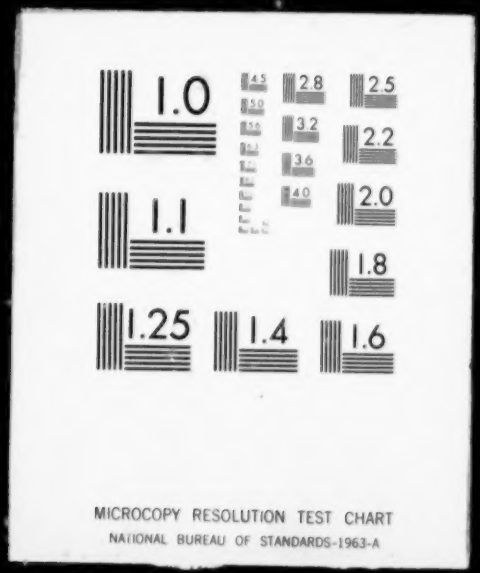

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 077 494 JC 730 132

AUTHOR	Renzuli, Joseph S.; Callahan, Carolyn M.
TITLE	Development of a Follow-Up Questionnaire for Community College Graduates. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Manchester Community Coll., Conn.
SPONS AGENCY	Connecticut State Dept. of Education, Hartford. Div. of Vocational Education.
PUB DATE	30 Jun 72
NOTE	21p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Community Colleges; *Counselor Attitudes; Curriculum Evaluation; *Graduate Surveys; Post Secondary Education; *Questionnaires; Student Reaction; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	*Manchester Community College

ABSTRACT

The general purpose of the study reported was to develop and field test a follow-up questionnaire for community college graduates that would provide evaluative information about: (1) the effectiveness of specific courses offered at Manchester Community College, (2) graduates' attitudes about their college program in general, and (3) graduates' attitudes about the counseling services they received while attending the college. After reviewing the literature related to evaluation in higher education, open-ended questionnaires were sent to all faculty members and to a random sample of 30 graduates. They were asked to list areas of concern and specific questions dealing with curriculum relevancy. Information about counseling services was solicited from the counselors. The second step in developing the follow-up questionnaire consisted of summarizing and categorizing the responses of persons who completed the input questionnaire and transforming each major question and area of concern into a structured questionnaire item. The pilot edition of the questionnaire was comprised of four parts and 36 items, as well as space for biographical information. With the exception of the open-ended items, the response mode for all items was based on a five-point Likert-type scale. The instrument was reviewed by second-year students, faculty members, counselors, and 30 graduates. The final version contains four parts and 32 items. Appendix C to the report provides the questionnaire, consisting of question and answer sheets. (Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.) (DB)

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Development of a Follow-Up Questionnaire for Community College Graduates

FINAL REPORT

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John R. Burton
(Project Director)

Manchester Community College
Bidwell Street
Manchester, Connecticut

June 30, 1972

Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official opinion or policy of state or federal governmental agencies, as the writers are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project.

JC 730 132

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
RESEARCH AND PLANNING UNIT
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

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I.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

For a community college to fulfill its obligation to its students and the community served by its graduates, it must be willing to gather systemetic and continuous feedback about the effectiveness of its educational programs. The main purpose of evaluating educational programs is to make judgments and decisions that will lead to improvements in the programs being evaluated. Although Manchester Community College currently conducts surveys of its graduates on both a divisional and college-wide basis, these surveys have not resulted in quantitative or qualitative data that are necessary to make well-informed curricular decisions. Because the primary function of the state community college is career education, this study focused on evaluating programs of those students who entered into full-time employment upon completion of their program at Manchester Community College and communicating those evaluations to persons in a position to bring about meaningful curricular changes.

One of the basic elements of a comprehensive system for program evaluation is an organized plan for gathering follow-up data from graduates. Such a plan should, of course, attempt to assess graduates' attitudes about general aspects of their educational program; however, to be maximally useful, it is essential for follow-up evaluations to pinpoint specific program components where change seems to be warranted. Without such specificity,

decision makers will be unable to establish direct relationships between evaluative data and those aspects of a program that are in need of modification.

The general purpose of the study reported herein was to develop and field test a follow-up questionnaire for community college graduates that would provide evaluative information about: (a) the effectiveness of specific courses offered at Manchester Community College, (b) graduates' attitudes about their college program in general, and (c) graduates' attitudes about the counseling services which they received while attending Manchester Community College. The following specific objectives guided in the development and field testing of the follow-up questionnaire:

1. Obtain a response large enough to constitute an adequate sample of the group and subgroups involved.

2. Obtain information sophisticated enough for one to determine if the vocational education that students received at Connecticut community colleges is adequate for entrance into specific occupations and to determine if this education is sufficient for the graduates' success in a particular occupation.

3. Obtain follow-up information in a quantitative form so that it may be processed at low cost by electronic data processing equipment.

The procedures used for developing and field testing a follow-up instrument for Manchester Community College graduates are described in the section that follows.

II.

METHODS

The first step in developing a planned collection of data for evaluative purposes is to clarify the aims and objectives which the proposed evaluation is designed to fulfill and to determine whether the type of data collected will lead to informed decision making on the part of persons who will analyze the evaluative data. At the outset of this study it was decided that the most useful information in assessing the effectiveness of vocational training programs would be data relating to student attitudes about the relevance and utility of specific courses in which they were enrolled prior to entering their present occupation. Two procedures were used to gather input information dealing with the relevance and utility of pre-vocational courses of study. First, the general literature dealing with evaluation in higher education was reviewed. Generally, it was found that investigations of the impact of college experiences on the student have been mainly concerned with personality changes and changes in attitudes and values that occur during the college years (Farnsworth, 1957; Goldsen, Rosenbert, Williams, and Suchman, 1960; Freedman, 1960; Sanford, 1967). Other studies dealt with the intellectual or cognitive growth of students as they progressed through college. A portion of this review was concerned with an analysis of instruments that have been used to obtain follow-up information from graduates of various types of educational training programs (Malsbary, 1970; Archambault, Rensulli, and Paulus,

1970; Shaw and Wright, 1967; Robinson, Athanasious, and Head, 1969). Finally, literature dealing with course evaluation was examined (Anderson, 1954; Spencer and Dick, 1965; Fults, 1952; Coffman, 1954). The main purpose of reviewing the above literature was to provide the investigators with both theoretical and practical information that might assist them in carrying out the present study. Following the search of the literature, an attempt was made to gather additional input information by soliciting opinions from persons who were considered to be prime interest groups in the study. A prime interest group consists of persons who have direct or indirect interest in the program being evaluated. Obtaining input information from these groups helps to insure that the questions raised in the follow-up instrument would be both relevant and comprehensible. In this study, faculty members and graduates of Manchester Community College were considered to be the main persons whose ideas and opinions should be reflected in the study. Open-ended questionnaires (see Appendices A and B) were sent to all faculty members at MCC and a random sample of 30 graduates from the Class of 1971. The two groups were asked to list areas of concern and specific questions that they felt should be raised in a study dealing with curriculum relevancy. Input information about counseling services was also solicited from counselors at MCC.

The second step in developing the follow-up questionnaire consisted of (1) summarizing and categorizing the responses of persons who completed the input questionnaire and (2) transforming

each major question and area of concern into a structured questionnaire item. All questions were reviewed by the Project Director and the investigators in an effort to insure comprehensiveness; to minimize duplication, ambiguity, and overlap among items; and to keep the amount of time necessary for completing the instrument within reasonable bounds. The pilot edition of the questionnaire consisted of the following four parts:

Part A:	Evaluation of Five Specific Courses	14 Items
Part B:	Program in General	8 Items
Part C:	Counseling	7 Items
Part D:	Open-Ended Questions	7 Items

The instrument also included space for biographical information. With the exception of the open-ended items, the response mode for all items was based on a five point Likert-type scale. The questionnaire packet also included a cover letter from the Project Director explaining the nature and purpose of the study.

For purposes of assessing the relevancy and reliability of individual items, a group of second year students at MCC was asked to review the instrument and comment on any items that did not seem clear. The pilot edition was also circulated among faculty members and counselors for their suggestions and comments.

Finally, the pilot edition was mailed to a random sample of 30 graduates of Manchester Community College (1971). Since the basic purpose of field testing the pilot edition was to gain additional feasibility information that could be used in structuring

the final instrument, the results of this edition were not tabulated. They were studied, however, in an attempt to determine the usefulness of information derived from each item. This analysis coupled with feedback obtained from faculty members, counselors, and second year students who reviewed the instrument for clarity, was used to develop the final version of the questionnaire (see Appendix C). The material was presented to a representative from the Optical Scanning Corporation so that an answer sheet could be prepared in machine-readable format.

III.

CURRENT STATUS AND ANTICIPATED RESULTS

Because of the changes in personnel at Manchester Community College, this project did not become operational until approximately six weeks after the date indicated in the project proposal. For this reason, the collection of data was delayed and the final analysis cannot be prepared until a representative number of questionnaires is received from graduates. Listed below is a description of the current status of the data gathering effort and a statement regarding the information that will be included in an Addendum to this report:

Current Status

1. All data received to date has been tabulated and is being prepared for key punching and computer analysis.

2. A follow-up letter has been sent to all graduates who have not yet returned their questionnaires.

3. The Optical Scanning Corporation is preparing the plates for a machine readable version of the answer sheet included in Appendix C.

CONTENT OF THE ADDENDUM

(To Be Submitted Upon Receipt of Additional Data)

1. A computer program that will enable an IBM 360/60 computer to translate data from Optical Scanning output tapes to alpha and numeric printed output. Data from Part A of the questionnaire will be analyzed by individual courses according to program of study (i.e., college major). Information will also be available regarding student opinions of these courses taken as electives. Summative evaluation data about the students' programs in general (Part B of the questionnaire) will be classified by college major and reported. Finally, student opinions about counseling services (Part C of the questionnaire) will be presented. The computer output will also provide summaries of biographical information about respondents. Responses to open-ended questions will not be dealt with in the computer program.

2. A statistical presentation of data obtained from all questionnaires returned by members of the Class of 1971.

3. Recommendations for future use of the questionnaire.

4. Recommendations for disseminating the results of this study to other community colleges in Connecticut so that they can also make use of the questionnaire if they so desire. The machine readable answer sheet will be made available to other community colleges for the costs of printing.

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MCC/S01 Appendix A

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Follow-Up Study of MCC Graduates

We have been asked by the administration of MCC to conduct a follow-up study of 1971 graduates. The purpose of this study is to determine the relevancy and value of specific courses to graduates' present employment or pursuit of continued education.

As a graduate, you have no doubt given some thought to the effectiveness of the program at MCC. We would like our evaluative efforts to reflect as much as possible your concerns; and therefore, we are seeking your assistance in obtaining graduate "input" information that will help us construct a relevant instrument that will be mailed to all 1971 graduates.

In the space below and on the back of this page, will you please list the areas of concern and specific questions and problems that you believe an evaluative study dealing with curriculum relevancy should focus upon. Please do not sign your name to this questionnaire. All information supplied by faculty and students in the study will be strictly confidential and no attempt will be made to identify persons completing individual questionnaires.

Will you please return this questionnaire in the attached envelope within three days. Because a small sample of students has been selected for this initial "input" questionnaire, it is important that we receive as many responses as possible. Thank you for your assistance.

Joseph S. Renzulli
Carolyn M. Callahan

Appendix B

MCC/F01

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Follow-Up Study of MCC Graduates

We have been asked by the administration of MCC to conduct a follow-up study of 1971 graduates. The purpose of this study is to determine the relevancy and value of specific courses to graduates' present employment or pursuit of continued education.

As a faculty member you have no doubt given some thought to the effectiveness of the program at MCC. We would like our evaluative efforts to reflect as much as possible your concerns; and therefore, we are seeking your assistance in obtaining faculty "input" information that will help us construct a relevant instrument that will be mailed to all 1971 graduates.

In the space below and on the back of this page, will you please list the areas of concern and specific questions and problems that you believe an evaluative study dealing with curriculum relevancy should focus upon. Please do not sign your name to this questionnaire. All information supplied by faculty and students in the study will be strictly confidential, and no attempt will be made to identify persons completing individual questionnaires.

Will you please return this questionnaire in the attached envelope within three days. Thank you for your assistance.

Joseph S. Renzulli
Carolyn M. Callahan

Appendix C

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Follow-Up Evaluation Study of Courses and

Counseling Program at M.C.C.

Dear

We have been asked by the administration of M.C.C. to conduct a study that is designed to determine the relevancy and value of various aspects of the programs offered by the College. We would like to enlist your cooperation by asking you to complete the questionnaire below (estimated time less than 20 minutes). Your assistance will help us to evaluate the effectiveness of selected components of the program, and hopefully, to bring about programatic changes if such changes appear to be warranted. Although this study required that we know the names of respondents, please be assured that all information will be treated as strictly confidential, and no attempt will be made to relate responses to the persons participating in the study.

Please complete and return the answer sheet within five days. A return envelope is enclosed. Do not return the question sheet. If you are presently enrolled full-time in an educational institution and are not employed on a full-time basis, please complete only the last page of the Answer Sheet and return.

Sincerely,

John R. Burton
Project Director
Project Vocational Follow-Up

* *

Directions

The Following Questionnaire is Divided Into Four Parts:

Part A deals with specific courses in which you were enrolled.

Part B deals with general aspects of the program at M.C.C.

Part C deals with the counseling program.

Part D consists of open-ended questions which allow you to make specific suggestions.

Please read each statement and mark your answer sheet as follows:

SA	if you Strongly Agree with the statement.
A	if you Agree more than you disagree with the statement.
D	if you Disagree more than you agree with the statement.
SD	if you Strongly Disagree with the statement.
NA	if the statement Does Not Apply.

Part A: Evaluation of Specific Courses.

Directions: Listed below are the names of some of the courses that you were enrolled in while at M.C.C.

I. _____

II. _____

III. _____

IV. _____

V. _____

The Roman Numeral at the head of each column on your answer sheet corresponds to one of the courses listed above. Read each of the following statements and mark the space that best represents your opinion about the course indicated by the Roman Numeral. It is suggested that you consider one course at a time. In other words, work your way down Column I, and then return to the first statement and begin evaluating the course corresponding to Roman Numeral II. Continue this procedure until you have worked your way down all five columns.

1. This course was relevant to the overal program in which I majored.

2. The material covered in this course was often repetitious of material covered in other courses which I took at M.C.C.

3. This course provided me with an adequate background for the next course that I took in this area.

4. The knowledge that I acquired in this course is useful to me in my present occupation.

5. My instructor in this course did not provide me with an accurate picture of my ability to perform in my chosen occupation.

6. If this course included a laboratory, experiences in the lab were available in the development of specific skills needed for my present occupation. Mark NA if this course did not include a laboratory.

7. If this course included a laboratory, the equipment used in the lab was generally not up-to-date with equipment being used in the field.

8. If this course included a laboratory, the equipment used in the lab was generally in good condition.

9. In this course, the instructor's knowledge of his field was comprehensive and up-to-date.

10. This course stimulated me to do some outside reading and to explore this subject matter area further.

11. This course did not provide me with sufficient opportunity to investigate topics that were of particular interest to me.

12. The skills covered in this course enabled me to perform at my present job without any additional training.

13. Subject matter or skills notwithstanding, this course stimulated my enthusiasm toward entering my present occupation.

14. This course met with the expectations that I had about the course when I enrolled in it.

Part B: Program in General.

1. The program in which I majored allowed sufficient opportunity for elective courses.

2. The time spent at M.C.C. in preparation for my present job would have been better spent in on-the-job training.

3. As a result of my program at M.C.C., opportunities for continued advancement and growth in earning potential have been increased.

4. My education at M.C.C. was personally fulfilling regardless of the degree to which I was prepared for a vocation.

5. The placement service was helpful in assisting me to find the type of work for which I was prepared. Mark NA if you did not use the placement service.

6. My employer placed considerable emphasis on the types of courses that I took at M.C.C. when hiring me for my present position.

7. Employers placed more emphasis on the fact that I had an Associate's degree than they did on the career courses in which I was enrolled.

8. Employers appeared to favor training which led to a degree in a specific area rather than a program leading to a general degree.

Part C: Counseling. Please Note. For items pertaining to Counseling: If counseling services were not sought and/or used by you, please mark NA on your answer sheet for the following items.

1. My counselor(s) gave me a realistic picture of my ability to perform in my chosen occupation.

2. The counselor(s) helped me to see more clearly my educational and vocational objectives.

3. If I had personal problems while at MCC, I discussed these problems with my counselor(s).

4. When I sought the services of a counselor(s) he did not help me to deal effectively with personal problems.

5. The counselor(s) gave me a realistic picture of the job market in my field and/or opportunities for transfer to a four year institution.

Answer Sheet

Circle: SA if you Strongly Agree with the statement.

A if you Agree more than you disagree with the statement.

D if you Disagree more than you agree with the statement.

SD if you Strongly Disagree with the statement.

NA if the statement Does Not Apply.

Part A: Evaluation of Specific Courses.

Statement Numbers	I	II	III	IV	V
1.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
2.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
3.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
4.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
5.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
6.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
7.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
8.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
9.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
10.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
11.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
12.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
13.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA
14.	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA	SA A D SD NA

Answer Sheet

Circle: SA if you Strongly Agree with the statement.

A if you Agree more than you disagree with the statement.

D if you Disagree more than you agree with the statement.

SD if you Strongly Disagree with the statement.

NA if the statement does Not Apply

Part B: Program in General

1. SA A D SD NA
2. SA A D SD NA
3. SA A D SD NA
4. SA A D SD NA
5. SA A D SD NA
6. SA A D SD NA
7. SA A D SD NA
8. SA A D SD

Part C: Counseling

1. SA A D SD NA
2. SA A D SD NA
3. SA A D SD NA
4. SA A D SD NA
5. SA A D SD NA

Answer Sheet

Part D: Open-Ended Questions

Directions: Please answer in the space provided. Use the back of this page if you need more room.

1. Which courses in your major area at M.C.C. were most useful to you in your present occupation.

2. Which courses in your major area at M.C.C. were least useful to you in your present occupation?

3. What skills, principles, or concepts are you applying now in your present job that were totally absent in your studies at M.C.C.?

4. Which courses that are not currently being offered at M.C.C. do you feel are necessary for persons preparing to work in your area or field?

5. In the space below, please make any comments or suggestions that you feel would contribute to the improvement of the program in which you majored at M.C.C.?

Answer Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Former name if different from above: _____

Year of Graduation from M.C.C.: _____ Major: _____

Present Occupational/Educational Status (Check all that Apply)

_____ Full-time Employment in Connecticut _____ _____
(Occupation)

_____ Full-time Employment outside of Connecticut _____
(Specify State)

Annual Salary _____

_____
(Occupation)

_____ Full-time Student _____ Major _____
(College)

Number of Credit Hours transferred from M.C.C. _____

_____ Part-time Student _____ Major _____
(College)

Number of Credit Hours Transferred From M.C.C. _____

_____ Part-time Employment _____ _____
(Occupation) (City and State Where)
(You Are Employed)

_____ Armed Forces _____ _____
(Branch) (Military Occupation)

_____ Housewife

_____ Unemployed, but actively seeking employment.

_____ Other (Specify) _____

Are you working in your chosen area or field or pursuing continued education in the area of your choice?

Did you have to go outside of Connecticut to find work in your chosen area or field?

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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